

In the entertainment area we have Falcon, Chronos Quest, Manhunter and Leisure Suit Larry II and bunches more. All of these are extra fine examples of the ST's ability to provide endless hours of exciting, edge of the seat entertainment.

For productivity, there are just too many to list here that have appeared in the last 60 days. (most are of top notch quality) I will, however, take a moment or two to mention a company who is a neighbor to the north, ISD Marketing, this is firm with a vision on the future. ISD has brought to the ST area Five excellent programs to date. Two of which are; DynaCadd and Calamus, I have been fortunate to see samples of the output of both of these extra special programs and believe me, being impressed is the weak way to describe how I felt after having seen what these two jewels are capable of! Folks, you owe it to yourselves to see these two programs in action and any user who is serious about Desktop Publishing should not be with out them.

Gem is a DRI original, and am I sorry a guy named Wilga was not there in "the beginning". His creation, Neodesk II, is one mighty fine desktop. Neodesk II has embodied all the features obviously missing from the original Neodesk and then some! Move over Mac, here is a really functional Desktop.

This year is going to be interesting for sure, already the enthusiasm is climbing and the expectations of Atari's performance is, at last, at a two year high.

Ralph.....

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NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

CALAMUS - A Report
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by Don Smith

I've gone through the Calamus manual word-for-word. I've tried every function I could. The following is a report on some of the problems I've found, but I first want to say that Calamus is a first rate program. It is far beyond anything I've seen for personal Desktop Publishing. I think it inevitable that a program of this power has some initial bugs. When you consider it in the whole, however, you'll see that the remaining problems are few compared to the many powerful features that work well right now. This is an error report, and by it's very nature, the uninformed could think it's a negative statement on Calamus. This is not the case. I cannot emphasize enough how terrific Calamus is. I've written this report to help us all to get the few remaining problems straightened out. Also, despite my best research, some of the problems could be a short between the headphones on my part. I'm looking for feedback here.

Here's what I've found:

In some cases, attempting to insert a time stamp directly into a layout results in a "fatal error". I've grown to know and hate the alert box that tells me that. For some comical reason, it gives me the option of "CONTINUE"... which never works. The only path out of this alert box is the desktop... a crash if you will. When I tried this later with larger text frames containing information, the crash did not result. Strange.

You cannot crop .IMG pictures yet. Yes, you can enable the crop feature, but what you'll get is the upper left corner of the picture as the cropped area. The book mentions on pages XXI-4 and 5 that Calamus doesn't handle post processing of scanned images yet... that it's better to do cropping outside Calamus at the moment.

If you set vertical and horizontal guidelines, with magnetic properties, than any frame created will fill to the rest of the page or to the next horizontal and/or vertical magnetic guideline despite your best effort to nail down the lower right corner in the position of your choice. You must turn off the magnetism to re size. I haven't decided if this is a feature or a bug. The manual doesn't mention this capability. For the moment, lets consider it a feature. If you set guidelines and don't which to fill all the white space between the guidelines with your frame, then create your frame before enabling the magnetism.

I'm typing this report with the Calamus Text Editor. I like it, but it still needs streamlining. I was entering some text for test purposes, and at one point, the <RETURN> key took me only halfway back. Despite my best efforts, I couldn't see the left half of my document. I exported the text the the text frame I had previously opened, and the result was the same. I then imported the text BACK into the Calamus Text Editor, and VIOLA! All the text was there!

However, after typing in this document and attempting to downsize the

text editor window, the system crashed. I had the window at full size for entering the text you are reading now.

Choosing the FRAME FOOTNOTE ENTRY icon without a frame selected resulted in a "Fatal Error" alert. Again, the only way out was a system crash.

Same thing happens with INDEX ENTRY. I may have attempted an improper operation, but please guys, don't send me to the electric chair for crossing against the light... just alert me to my ineptitude.

I had an interesting time working on the hyphenation dictionary. The manual does not alert you to the fact that you have to load a dictionary first before you can use it. Again, the program should alert me to load a dictionary before attempting to use this function, but instead it let me flounder around. When I went back to the text frame I had previously selected, I was presented with a VERY BIG "less than" sign (about 48 pts high is my guess), and every line of the text was written over one another. All the lines took up only one line of the frame. By the way, there was no "less than" sign in my text. Went to the text editor to try to clear things up, but the system crashed. Sure am getting used to that. Once I figured out that I needed to load a hyphenation dictionary first, that function performed as advertised. Sure wish they can alert you to load the dictionary if you attempt to use that function without one.

On the screen, a text underline is WAY below the text. It rides the upper part of the text on the next line down. Haven't tried printing it yet to see what it looks like.. although a big strength of Calamus is its capability to print EXACTLY what you see on the screen.

Could not get the CHECK TEXT STYLE icon to work.

The manual left out the explanation for DECIMAL SYMBOL FOR DECIMAL TABS and instead used the explanation for the OUTLINE THICKEN STATIC/DYNAMIC instead. Needless to say, the header OUTLINE THICKEN STATIC/DYNAMIC cannot be found.

Why were the sample Macros in German? Even so, I could understand most of them, but they didn't work anyway. I would select a block of text and invoke the macro.. sometimes by the mouse, sometimes by the keyboard. Instead of affecting the marked block, it would affect the text from the beginning of the marked block to the END OF THE TEXT! That is, when it affected it at all. At one point, selecting the macros either by mouse or keyboard resulted in the text simply disappearing from the text frame.

When I first purchased Calamus, I was concerned that the fonts would be protected. I called ISD and was told by the last fellow to leave before the Christmas holidays that I would be able to share my created pages with another Calamus owner.. that the other Calamus owner didn't have to own the same fonts as I did to create the page. He said the other Calamus owner would be able to create my page. In the manual, however, it later says that the fonts used in a layout need to be available to the program with the page is loaded. If my fonts can't be used on his program (protection, remember?) then how can we share those pages? This is a question I would like answered.

Under Page Layout, MINIMAL MARGINS has no effect, even though a printer driver is selected.

Page XIII - 1 and 2: It says click "USER" field for user defined page dimensions. No such field. Probably means "OTHER" field.

No "Centimeters" measurement either, it's INC. Probably means the INCREMENT you've chosen elsewhere, which could be centimeters, or inches, or cicerós, or picas.

At one point, and I can't tell you exactly where, but Calamus simply froze. As I moved the mouse around, the help lines in the upper right corner continued to display the text associated with my mouse position, but otherwise the program was dead. No dropping menus, no icon response. Just the helpful text was moving. I had created a page with one large text frame, and was groping around trying to remember how to create a second page. I had clicked on the right arrow to page, but since I hadn't created the second page, it was unresponsive. I later tried that when the program was rebooted, but the program did not freeze. I had set the magnetic guides for one row and one column, with one inch borders before drawing the text frame (which, if you remember my earlier comment, filled the white space between the magnetic guides).

That's it for the moment. It's what I've found after reading through the entire manual with the program in front of me. My configuration is a Mega ST4 with a 60-meg hard drive. During my analysis, I had NO desk accessories loaded, and NO AUTO programs loaded. The computer was "clean". Nothing was attached to the cartridge port. At the moment, my printer is an NEC LC-890, the BEST Postscript laserprinter for the consumer in my opinion. It has HP LaserJet Plus emulation, however, for Calamus output. It does surprisingly well, but I've decided to get the Atari laserprinter. Calamus makes that printer SING!

I'll be spreading this file around to get feedback. Maybe I can be shown where I've gone wrong.. maybe it'll help ISD get the few remaining wrinkles out of Calamus. I can work around most of the problems I've listed, but sure would like to see them fixed. From what I've heard, ISD is aggressively honing their product.

You can reply to me on Genie at DON.SMITH, CIS at 75565,1351 or call my BBS, The Atarist in Houston at 713-541-9160. Look for my column, "By The Numbers", in ST X-Press magazine.

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CALAMUS - A Response
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A Response to a Report from Don Smith

12-28-88

First of all, thank you for your interest and your comments. I appreciate both. Let me also mention, to all that read these messages, that I am always interested in intelligent, constructive criticism and it is also a great pleasure to receive compliments on an excellent program.

Before I address your concerns in the order that they appeared, let me take this opportunity to mention that Calamus is constantly being cleaned and tightened up. As you are probably aware, Calamus Plus is being developed even as we speak and all the Calamus features are

receiving attention on a daily basis. Borland's German office has finally completed development for their Turbo C on the Atari ST. Calamus has now been compiled using it. (In fact, we were a Beta test site.) The result is a cleaner, tighter version than had been previously shipped.

Approximately 100K of memory is now available on the 1040ST. For those REGISTERED USERS interested in obtaining the latest version, please send in your program diskette only and we will install the latest version on your master disk at no charge.

The latest version has already addressed some of your concerns:

Inserting System Time both within the Text Editor or directly into the layout works correctly, 11.19 am, as does System Date, 12.29.1988.

The difficulty that apparently was randomly encountered in our .IMG cropping feature has been corrected.

The horizontal and vertical magnetic guidelines are an excellent feature of Calamus. Once you become more comfortable with them you will really enjoy the accuracy in positioning that you are now allowed. This feature does require activation and de-activation. Hint: By activating a frame and then pointing and clicking on the x and y coordinates, you can position any frame precisely.

The Calamus Text Editor was probably the single most difficult section of programming involved in development and overall, I am really pleased with the results. However, there are a few areas that will be addressed in time. You mentioned the <RETURN> key taking you halfway back in the Editor.

In order to see your document again may I suggest that you position your cursor at the last text character on the line above and then use your direction arrow to advance one more space to the right which will return you to the far left position.

In this current version, I was unable to duplicate your crash resulting from downsizing the Text Editor window.

Choosing either the FRAME FOOTNOTE ENTRY or the INDEX ENTRY icon without first selecting a frame, now results in an alert box appearing to advise you to PLEASE SELECT ONE TEXT FRAME. Note: It is not our intention to send you an early award for crossing against the light. In most cases the reason that Calamus will allow you to exit, not continue, concerns the decision that was made not to allow you to proceed with a corrupt file.

As a last minute decision the hyphenation dictionary was not shipped within the SYS folder simply because the memory that it requires can be put to better use based on the preponderance of 1040 owners that exist in the North American market. If you so choose, as perhaps a Mega owner would, simply put the STANDARD.CWB file within the SYS folder, rename it to CALAMUS.CWB and it will be loaded upon bootup. I apologize for the oversight in not mentioning this in a READ.ME file. The manual had been produced before this decision was taken. You may perform hyphenation without the dictionary loaded as hyphenation is based on an algorithm. However, the exceptions dictionary does make the algorithm even better and more accurate.

Text Underline is located in the FONT STYLE & SIZE menu under GET INTO STYLE MENU located in the bottom right hand corner. The fourth category in the MISCELLANEOUS STYLE SETTINGS is the UNDERLINE OFFSET which currently defaults at 5 points. Simply change that entry to your specifications.

GET TEXT STYLE works correctly. Highlight the text in question and click on this icon. The point size will change to reflect the text indicated. In FONT MENU the correct font that was used will now be highlighted.

Thank you for pointing out my oversight on the Decimal Tab. You may change the format character for a decimal tab to a . or whatever you choose and the decimal tab will react accordingly. A complete explanation of the decimal tab function is located in Chapter IX, Page 16 under INSERT DECIMAL TABS.

The sample macros are now in English. I apologize for this oversight. Some of those German macros cause the Text to disappear intentionally. Please learn our Macro section as this is one of the best features inherent within Calamus.

If you have saved either a Page or a document using fonts that you have created yourself, then naturally, until you make these fonts available to your friend, they will not be able to load your identical document. They can, however, substitute a font that they do possess in order to load your document. The only fonts that will not be interchangeable between different copies of Calamus are those that we are making available from Compugraphics (ISD Mkt./Compugraphics Press Release to follow at a later date.)

Minimal Margins works correctly in some of the drivers ie; the Atari SLM804 Laser Printer. However, and we are aware of this, some of the drivers have been written either incorrectly or incompletely or they just conform to the European A4 standard rather than our own. This is currently being addressed, corrections made and new drivers are being written. They will be uploaded onto online systems as soon as they are completed.

Yes, in Chapter XIII, page 2, USER was used rather than OTHER.

INC represents inches. I am having this changed to INCH. Centimeters is represented by CM. I don't understand your comment on increments.

Hopefully, all the random freezes and crashes will be eliminated. Please understand that this is quite an extensive program that has taken over three years to develop. I believe that Calamus is a great product and will only get better. It performs quite well with the SLM804 as you mentioned.

Note: For those using this printer, save the Raster setting in the Print screen on 2. This line was developed specifically for the Atari Laser Printer.

I have just downloaded 42 pages of comments on Calamus. I will read them all this weekend. Some are old, some are redundant and some are just plain silly, however, some are right to the point. Those will be addressed, as time permits. We will get the remaining wrinkles out of Calamus and I appreciate the input.

Calamus Information

A Response to the 42 pages....

December 30, 1988

Nathan Potechin ISD Marketing, Inc.

ISD Marketing, Inc. is coming online. Please give me about two more weeks to get setup with all of the major online services.

Back in February 1988 M. Cawthon said and I quote "I would be willing to pay the price if we start getting some real PRO software!". Well, three weeks ago we delivered Calamus. It has a suggested retail price of US \$299.95 and is well worth it.

Calamus is a professional desktop publishing solution based on the ST platform. Five months ago ISD Marketing released DynaCADD, a complete 2D and true 3D CADD (Computer Aided Design and Drafting) solution, also a professional package based on the ST platform. Regardless of what you may have heard, read or imagined, ISD today, with DynaCADD and Calamus, represents the two most important application software available in their respective disciplines, based on the ST platform. We will not turn our back on the ST platform as has been suggested. Instead, development continues on both Calamus Plus and DynaCADD 2.0. We support our products, we are committed to continuing development on the ST platform and we will live up to our commitments.

ISD and Ditek have been supporting the ST since its inception. To date, we have only represented five products;

Calamus, DynaCADD, (ST)Accounts, Masterplan and VIP Professional.

I am sure that these titles are not unknown to you and all represent serious application software. Please don't let anyone tell you that we will not support the ST. It is simply not true. On the contrary, it is our stated intention to offer a viable professional alternative to the Mac and IBM platforms. In DynaCADD and Calamus, that option now exists. We will continue to support the North American market to the best of our ability.

I promised to respond to 42 pages of comments downloaded from Genie yesterday. Fortunately, most of the comments had already been addressed or you would have had another 400K file to download. To the point...

1. Sales are already excellent

It seems that putting the DEMO version of Calamus online was a good idea. Yes, Piracy is an issue but I will address that specifically at a later date. The intention was to show you, the ST Owners and Dealers, that Calamus exists, it does exactly what it was supposed to do and we are proud of it. I believe that we have accomplished our purpose so if you liked the DEMO, buy the program.

2. Fonts

The Calamus Vector Font Editor will be available in about 2 months and will be sold as a separate item. The program itself is done but we

have not yet completed the manual. (Note: A LOGO created using the Calamus Font Editor can be included within a character set allowing it to be accurately scalable in 1 point increments up to 999.) The Editor will be offered with a selection of Fonts. The price, not yet determined, will reflect the quantity of Fonts that you choose to purchase. Note: Once prices have been determined I will put them online. We currently have approximately 12 more Font Families available, about 50 Fonts.

We have completed negotiations with FC FONT TECHNOLOGIES, a division of COMPUGRAPHICS. We will be offering you a selection of some of the best Fonts available, easily comparable to anything that Postscript produces. Check our list of COMPUGRAPHIC Font Families with your local Printer, then ask him the price on the IBM or MAC. COMPUGRAPHICS made an aggressive move to support us on the ST platform. They deserve credit. Let me also mention that it was not inexpensive to acquire the rights to these Fonts. This is a long term commitment to the ST platform. Again, LONG TERM COMMITMENT. The following is an excerpt from our Press Release:

We are pleased to announce that an agreement has been signed with Font Technologies, a division of the Compugraphics Corporation, Massachusetts, U.S.A. Further to our intention to offer the Consumer a viable, professional alternative to other computer platforms and software, we have obtained 84 Compugraphic fonts for Calamus from the following font families, available beginning in February 1989:

ITC Souvenir	CG Times	Bauer Bedoni
Garamond	ITC Korinna	Helios Rounded
Schneidler	Univers	CG Triumvirate
Futura II	CG Palacio	Souvenir Gothic
Greek	CG OmegaITC	American Typewriter
Raphael	Revue	CG Century Schoolbook
Uncial	Isabella	Typewriter Large Elite
Garth Graphic	ITC AGG	Wedding Text
Lucia Script	Park Ave	ITC Zapf Chancery
Old English	Cyrillic	Modern Black Letter
Antique Olive		

3. Printer Drivers

Yes, the printer driver on the SLM804 "SMOKES" as does most of the others. I think that Calamus and the Atari Laser Printer go well together. Imagine that! (It was raised and answered earlier but let me repeat that on the SLM804, Fill Patterns or Screen Rasters print best on the 2 Raster setting of Calamus. That is the reason it is there, to control the lines.) We have encountered a few difficulties with A4 sizing rather than letter on a few of the Drivers that are now being addressed. New drivers are being added and will appear online. More specifics on this later.

4. The ISD Commitment

Does everyone out there understand that ISD is committed to supporting Calamus on the ST platform!?!? I responded yesterday to DON.SMITH. Today I am generally addressing everyone else. Since some of you spent a great deal of time worrying this issue to death, drop it. We are here to stay. Who started this?? For what reason?? We are committed!! We support our products!! I cannot make it any plainer than that.

5. Product Packaging

By the way, obviously, I disagree with the assessment of some of you regarding our packaging. I thought it was clean, neat and to the point. Calamus sells itself. But you're right. We are all entitled to our own opinion.

6. Update Policy

There is a new version available that has been recompiled using Turbo C. Some difficulties have been corrected, ie; Cropping etc.. Updates are free but please send us in your original program disk. It will be returned to you the day that it is received. We will always try to improve the performance of Calamus. At the least, Printer Drivers and more file format compatibility will be added. I will not be any more specific until I have released new items and have actual facts to relate. New information will appear online. Thanks to all those that responded to questions on our behalf. I'll try to hold up my own end from now on.

Give us time. The first product was shipped to our US Distributors a little over two weeks ago and look at the rumours that appeared. The fact is that Calamus is a great product now. It can only get better and ISD, Calamus and the Atari ST platform is here to stay!!!

Regards,

Nathan Potechin, President,
ISD Marketing

Editor Note:

Coming within the next few weeks, an in depth report on the performance of Calamus and how well it interfaces with the neophyte user, so far, the average user is in for a treat using this superb Desk Top Publishing System.

CPU REPORT ' '
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By Michael Arthur

Digital Research's X/GEM Interface:

Over the past few weeks, much has been said and rumored about the new X/GEM Interface introduced by Digital Research. Many have wondered whether it is just a new revision of GEM, with minor changes, or whether it truly is a Multitasking GEM. As the ST uses GEM, the latter prospect brings great hopes to ST'ers, especially with the looming spectre of the Female Spanish Friend (Amiga) always hanging overhead.

As to the rumors of a new revision of GEM, they are true, as Digital Research has constantly updated GEM in the 3 years since its release, and the newest version (for IBM machines) is GEM/3. It, though, is not the great revelation that ST Users might expect. Even though it has full support of both Postscript and the new Bitstream Scalable Fonts, is much faster than earlier versions of GEM, and has integrated support for some printers, it is not a substantial enough revision to put in the ST.

However, Digital Research (DRI) has shown a new GEM XM Desktop in Europe. This is essentially a program switcher, which allows up to 12 programs to be in memory at one time, and for users to switch easily from one to the other. As it has the same features of GEM/3, it is a superb upgrade of GEM, combining limited concurrency and a new Desktop with new features that are excellent in themselves. DRI is shipping the GEM XM Desktop to the US in Early 1989 (for IBM Machines), and could possibly be an excellent prospect for a new version of GEM for the Atari ST.

But even limited multitasking is not seemingly enough for many ST Users, who see the Amiga, Mac, and IBM with multitasking OS's, and begin to wish that their Atari ST could also multitask. And while Beckemeyer Development has proven (with MT C-Shell) that high quality multitasking can be done with TOS programs, it will take a new revision of GEM for the ST to multitask GEM programs as well.

Hence, X/GEM....

X/GEM is a new version of GEM made for UNIX systems which combines GEM with MIT's X/Windows, a high level graphical environment for UNIX, giving X/GEM multitasking and multiuser abilities. It also will allow X/GEM to be compatible with current UNIX programs using X/Windows, while allowing future UNIX programs to use the GEM Programmer's Toolkit to utilize GEM's features in future applications.

Seeing this potential, Digital Research has decided to present the X/GEM environment to the Open Software Foundation, a group of leading UNIX developers that are developing a uniform Application Environment Specification based on UNIX. One of the OSF's main goals is to provide X/Windows as part of this environment, and X/GEM might be the Graphical User Environment component of OSF's plans.

Also, Microsoft is talking with DRI about licensing the GEM Toolkit itself for use in OS/2's Presentation Manager, and Digital Research plans to introduce their OS/2 GEM Toolkit around 30 days after Presentation Manager is shipping. All GEM programs using this Toolkit will run on OS/2 exactly as they do on other machines, except that they will conform to the Presentation Manager's User Interface.

There are many subtle, yet essential advantages to both Microsoft's using the GEM Toolkit in OS/2, and the OSF's using X/GEM for UNIX, including:

1) PROGRAMS THAT ARE EASILY PORTABLE FROM SYSTEM TO SYSTEM

Digital Research designed the AES and VDI Libraries, which make up the GEM Toolkit, to be portable over all types of hardware, and allow GEM programs to be ported from computer to computer with only 10-20% of its code rewritten to take advantage of that particular machine's features. This is evidenced by First Word, Timeworks Desktop Publisher, and VIP Professional being introduced so quickly for the Atari ST.

This means that since GEM is a proven technology, with over 800 applications written specifically for it, that by using the GEM Toolkit for OS/2, Microsoft could cause OS/2's software base, presently a dozen programs, to grow almost instantly to hundreds of applications, maybe including products such as Ventura Publisher (which is a GEM application).

Also, the OSF's new Applications Environment for UNIX could have a large number of new applications using both GEM's features and the UNIX Operating System virtually overnight.

In fact, when the Helios Operating System is complete, Atari plans to use the X/GEM Interface on the Abaq Transputer, so as to port many of the GEM programs from the IBM and ST over to it, giving it a headstart with a viable software base. Incidentally, they have not expressed plans to use it in the 68030 TT, which will also be a UNIX system.

2) A STANDARD GRAPHICAL ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL APPLICATIONS

While this is the goal of all Graphical Operating Systems, and systems like the Macintosh have achieved this in their own software base, there is yet to be a standard Windowing System across many varied computer systems. With GEM/3 and the Atari ST's GEM, Digital Research has done this on both the Atari ST and IBM machines, and X/GEM stands a good chance of doing the same for UNIX Machines, enabling all systems to have the same "look and feel".

Even though the GEM Toolkit for OS/2 will be designed to make OS/2's GEM applications consistent with the look and feel of Presentation Manager the CUA User Interface (Common User Access, IBM's acronym for the Windows environment) resembles GEM closely enough for it not to seriously hamper this goal.

Also, X/GEM will have GEM XM's new Desktop, having an environment resembling MultiFinder, in which applications run in (and can be accessed from) their own windows, for handling and using programs. I am not sure, but I think that Digital Research has chosen to forsake the old Desktop's Menu Bar to go with an environment more resembling NeXT's Workspace.

But even as I state the incredible features of the X/GEM system, the fact remains that although X/GEM is a superlative innovation, and the GEM Toolkit for OS/2 underlies Digital Research's ambitious plans for GEM itself, X/GEM is not the El Dorado, the ultimate multitasking GEM System, that the ST User has eagerly awaited for all these years.

Given this, you could easily state that the only hope for the Atari ST Operating System's significantly improving is for Atari to license the GEM XM System from Digital Research, in the hope that Atari would work

with DRI in the future to make a true multitasking GEM.

But, I am sorry to say, this is all a pipe dream....

The reason, simply enough, is that when Atari worked with Digital Research on porting GEM over to the ST, DRI did not have GEM completely finished. This resulted in many problems for both Atari's programming staff and DRI's engineers, and resulted in lots of angry feelings between Atari and Digital Research. Also, when Digital Research settled out of court with Apple over the look and feel of GEM, they made a stipulation that OEM's would have to re-license GEM from DRI whenever they updated to the newest version of GEM. As Atari is a licensee of GEM, if they were to work with DRI on a new version of GEM, they would have to make changes in their initial license to be able to use it.

In short, one main reason that GEM will never be improved for the Atari ST is because both Atari and Digital Research are possibly still holding deep grudges from the problems they had while porting GEM. If this is truly so, then the two companies' bad relations make it improbable that they will ever work together again. The second reason is because Atari does not wish to go through the trouble of updating the Atari ST's GEM to have more powerful capabilities, even though such a decision would enormously benefit ST Users, and help give the ST Userbase confidence in Atari's prospects for the future....

Unless, of course, Atari were to follow the TRUE meaning of the New Year and put the problems of the past behind them, going to Digital Research to make a sincere effort to heal any harsh feelings between them (if any still exist), and forge through any problems that might arise, in order that both companies may finally work together to improve GEM for the benefit of all Atari ST Users, in the spirit of mutual cooperation that both the Talmud and the Bible ask us all to do. But knowing Atari....

But even if Atari decides not to upgrade GEM on the Atari ST, there is still hope for all ST Users, in Robert Shady of Microtext Software.

Microtext Software is planning to develop a FULL implementation of BSD 4.2/4.3 UNIX for the Atari ST, being totally Posix-IEEE compatible and fully supporting X/WINDOWS. Microtext is also considering contacting Digital Research themselves, so they can port X/GEM to the Atari ST for use on their UNIX. IF they did this, all they would have to do is provide multitasking for TOS programs (a task which has already been done by Beckemeyer Development, with MT C-Shell) and they could provide a fully multitasking ST Operating System.

Lest you think that UNIX cannot be implemented on the 68000 chip, there are many Altos 6800 workstations around that run UNIX, and they mostly use the 68000 chip....

But this is all in the future. In the present time, the fact still remains that even though Digital Research has been constantly updating GEM since it was first introduced, even to the extent of such a powerful environment as X/GEM, there is little hope in the foreseeable future for Atari ST Users to gain the El Dorado of operating systems, a multitasking

GEM that will erase the looming spectre of that everpresent Female Spanish Friend, the Amiga, and allow ST'ers to use their incredible machines to a level unimaginable before.

But as this IS a New Year, we can still hope and work for a day when ST Users will be able to multitask GEM programs, and when the Atari ST's operating system will finally blaze a path to the forefront of innovative computer technology.

But ponder, if you will, on this question:

- 1) What do the Atari ST and the Amiga TRULY have in common?

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CPU REPORT CONFIDENTIALâ €
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Armonk, NY -----	IBM has appointed James Cannavino, 44, to head its Personal Computer division, replacing William Lowe, who resigned to become Executive Vice President of Xerox. Lowe was not forced to resign, but rumors say he quit because of IBM's PS/2 line of computers not selling as well as expected, and IBM's losing market share to the many Clone Manufacturers.
Warrenville, IL -----	Reeve Software has introduced Diamond, a new Operating System for the Atari 8-Bit having a GEM-like interface, with windows, Icons, and Menus. It lets you have 16 Desk Accessories, allows up to 16 Megs of Extended RAM for direct access, and can be used with the ST Mouse. Hopefully more on this in a future issue....
CPUville, USA -----	ETA Systems, a subsidiary of Control Data Corporation which develops supercomputers, has shown their use of Atari ST's running under the IDRIS Operating System as development stations for both writing supercomputer software and to help design supercomputers.
Armonk, NY -----	IBM has introduced PC-DOS 4.0, a new version of DOS which supports up to 512 Megabyte Hard Disk Partitions, has a Windows-like Graphical "Shell" for Disk Utilities and handles LIM/EMS Extended RAM easier. It does have some bugs, though, and PC-Ditto compatibility is in doubt. An upcoming DOS 4.01 is expected to clean up the compatibility problems with many IBM Clones.

A Different Viewpoint =====

By: Chris Thompson

The fiasco that was Fiscal Year 1988 in Sunnyvale has finally drawn to a close. Atari nearly killed itself by manhandling the US marketplace. Developers dropped Atari from their programming schedule. There were even rumors of the great guru Tom Hudson abandoning "Old Fuji" for the IBM scene. Ralph screamed and yelled and pointed fingers, and, I would like to believe, caused a stir in the management ranks at Atari. As I write this on Christmas Day, 1988, I see a new year of growth for Atari on the Horizon. I see Sig Hartmann as a beacon in the storm. I see an Atari ad campaign blitzing the Market. I see new machines that earn the respect of reviewers and critics. I see software companies falling over each other trying to get onto the Atari bandwagon. I believe it can happen.

I'll be the first to admit that I'm a born pessimist. My motto is "The only two types of people in the world are Optimists and Realists. "As much as we would like it, Atari may never be "America's computer" because IBM has too much of a strangle hold on the market. I do, however, think that they could come close. We have a powerhouse sitting in these grey plastic boxes that blows away anything else in its class, based on potential. In reality, it is not as powerful as it could be due to dealer apathy. What would it take for the ST to be "Super CPU"? A few slight modifications and we're set.

The 68000-16 CPU upgrade to 16Mhz is tops on the list. When the ST first came out 8Mhz was incredible. (so was a 1200 baud modem if anyone's interested) Now we have IBM machines running 3 times as fast at 25Mhz. CPU report in issue #67 even listed a 33Mhz IBM clone. As I understand, the upgrade is being delayed due to continued problems with Monochrome output. We wish them well. I know I'll be first in line to get one when they do come out.

A graphics board is next. Not a neat software hack like Spectrum 512, but a real time graphics board. The ST is severely limited by its low color and low resolution graphics. Granted, in 1986, 320x200 w/ 16 colors in real time was quite strong. We now have the 'Lowly' IBM (never before touted for it's graphics) with Super VGA cards that blow the ST away. The fabled Atari Rumor Mill has Atari with a board in it's Research & Development department. I'd like to see 640x400 at 16 colors at the VERY least. This will help to compete with the Amiga. Of course the folks in Cupertino aren't standing by idly as the Amiga 2500 and a new Super Graphics board are expected.

Multi-Tasking GEM. It's a reality at Digital Research, why not on the ST? C'mon Jack, programs like Revolver and Juggler II may simulate a multitasking environment, they don't match up to the real thing.

Sound is a must. I spent some time recently at Cincinnati's biggest Atari/Commodore retailer. That's all they sell so there is ample room for showcasing both systems. Carl, a friend of mine, booted up Aegis SONIX on an Amiga 2000 and proceeded to play several songs through some speakers. (incl. Michael Jackson's 'Thriller' complete with digitized wolf howls)

One guy asked, "Wow, is that a stereo Monitor?"

Carl answered, "Yes, but it's volume is all the way down. The Sound you hear is coming from Radio Shack's cheapest Amplifier and these two tiny speakers here. The sound output from the Amiga is in Stereo and is very near the quality of a Compact Disc."

Another customer standing nearby (who I recognized as an ex-Atarian who defected recently to the Amiga) said; "Well, that's what you get when you put a real Sound Chip in a computer. Atari went the easy route and put in the same chip that was in the Timex-Sinclair 2068"

The man, a new buyer looking for a system, decided at that point to get an Amiga. He wouldn't listen to my cries of "But what about the ST's MIDI?" and ended up buying an Amiga 500.

All is not lost, however. Another of my wants has already been fulfilled. I am an avid modem user and hope to have my own BBS someday. I have always been in awe of the IBM's multi RS232 ports. Now any computer can have up to eight ports with the SP808 from NiteLite Systems. Each RS232 port has it's own 65C02 processor to help keep the drain off of the 68000. If you listen to the rumor mill (which I do from time to time) Matt Singer's incredible FoReM ST Bulletin Board program will be getting a facelift in FoReM Elite. MultiLine support is rumored to be part of the package.

Of course, all of this is written without the true knowledge of the capabilities of the TT and ATW systems. If the TT is really upwardly compatible with the ST, all of this may be moot. If it goes as planned, the TT will run at 25Mhz. It will have graphics that will make an Amiga user choke.. 640x400 with 16 million colors at once??? 1280x960 with 16 out of 16M colors??? I can hear the Amigoids coughing right now. Especially if we see Dave Small bring his Spectre 128 to the TT.
A 25Mhz Mac???

So we now see that all is not lost. After my rather doom filled article in ST-Report #66 I can impart this news to you. With a few add-on's the ST would be a TRULY incredible machine, not just a POTENTIALLY incredible machine.

GFA ~ MICHTRON
=====

As of Jan 1, 1989 MichTron will no longer be selling GFA programs. This is a brief statement of what happened.

MichTron has received notice from GFA Systemtechnik that after January 1,

MichTron is no longer licensed to sell or service GFA products.

Since last July, MichTron has known that they were going to lose the GFA line. In July MichTron had a great relationship with GFA. MichTron will have paid GFA almost \$150,000 in royalties during the past two years. GFA seemed very happy with sales in the USA. In a very weak market (The ST in the USA), where most business software companies were either going out of business or just barely making a living, the MichTron GFA partnership was profitable to both parties.

But Rolf Hilchner, the CEO of GFA, wanted more. He wanted all of the profits, not just a percentage, and he wanted the right to say what products would be sold (MichTron had refused to sell 4 or 5 GFA programs that they did not like in the past year). GFA wanted to have their own subsidiaries in the USA, UK and France.

In September at the PCW show in England Hilchner told his English publisher, Glentop, that they were going to be terminated. HiSoft heard about this and asked MichTron if they would sell the HiSoft line of programs in the US. MichTron sent sample copies of the HiSoft programs to its beta testers. When all of the MichTron beta testers came back and said that the HiSoft programs were much better than the GFA programs. Upon hearing this MichTron signed a contract to sell HiSoft software in the US after Jan 1. In early October we told GFA that we were going to sell HiSoft basic in the US. Needless to say, GFA was not thrilled with us selling a better basic than theirs.

In November, at the Comdex show Rolf asked if MichTron was going to sell GFA's BASIC for the Amiga. MichTron told him that the program had too many bugs in it, and that GFA should spend another month or two and get the bugs out and then we would talk about it.

It seems that GFA has, since early last summer, changed from a company that sold good software and supported its users to a company obsessed with making money and to heck with its customers. GFA 3.0 is a good BASIC, but it has some serious bugs in it. Bugs that GFA has known about since last summer, and they have done nothing about them. Now they are releasing a new version of BASIC on the Amiga that is just loaded with bugs. At Comdex, MichTron could not keep it running for more than 1 or 2 minutes without it locking up.

Now GFA has terminated its only distributor/publisher in the US, and it has NO plans as of this date on how it will continue to support, users, update the existing user base and fix the bugs in the US version of 3.0. GFA's feelings on this, is that it is mad at MichTron so MichTron is fired and to heck with all the users who have purchased its programs. If you doubt this last statement, call Germany and ask them how they are going to handle updating owners of GFA BASIC 3.0.

We at MichTron will continue to answer questions and support the GFA products on both GENIE and CIS as best we can. Any other support will have to be obtained from Germany. The phone number there is 011-49-211-550400. You might note that Germany is 5 hours ahead of EST. So you will have to call early in the morning to reach them. Their product support people do speak English.

Short day by day description of the fallout

July 1, 1988

Rolf Hilchner flies over from Germany to tell MichTron that he is going to start a subsidiary in each of the countries where he now has a publisher. He wants to hire one of my employees, (Rob Washburn), as the president of GFA USA. He will start this GFA USA sometime in the first quarter of 1989.

September 1, 1988

Rob Washburn and Gordon Monnier flew to Germany to meet Rolf Hilchners boss and Mr Thomas the owner of GFA Systemtechnique. A business agreement was finalized where Gordon Monnier would be the chairman of the board of GFA USA and would receive 10% of the profits of this company. Rob Washburn would be president of GFA USA. GFA would purchase all the stock of MichTron. (GFA manuals and boxes) and pay MichTron \$30,000 for the loss of GFA's business.

Sept 15, 1988

HiSoft approached MichTron and asked MichTron to carry the HiSoft line.

October 7, 1988

MichTron signs contract to sell HiSoft starting in 1989.

October 15, 1988

MichTron tells GFA that they will be selling Hisoft programs Jan 1st.

October 20, 1988

Rolf Hilchner gets on a conference call on GENIE and tells MichTron that the agreement they reached in September with him and the owner of GFA will not be honored if MichTron sells HiSoft BASIC. Rob Washburn then tells Rolf Hilchner that if he is not a man of his word he, Rob Washburn, does not want to work for him and quits as President of GFA USA.

November 1, 1988

GFA asks us to get them 2 hotel rooms at Comdex. Hilchner says he is not coming that the rooms are for two of his employees.

November 13, 1988

Hilchner appears the day before Comdex. He tells MichTron employees that the only reason he came was to find someone to replace MichTron.

November 14, 1988

Hilchner looks over the MichTron booth and is very upset because MichTron is not pushing GFA products. When told that, MichTron sees no advantage in pushing products that GFA is trying to find another publisher for and that they are going to lose shortly. Hilchner is visibly upset.

November 15, 1988

Hilchner shows MichTron GFA BASIC 3.0 for the Amiga, (this is supposed to be the finished version), it locked up within seconds. Hilchner and Frank Ostrowski then decide that the reason for the lockup is the version of the operating system that Commodore is using is different from the one that GFA developed the program on. Hilchner asks MichTron if they will

sell GFA Amiga BASIC in in the US. MichTron tells him no. Not until they get a bug free version. Hilchner is very upset with MichTron and thinks they are just stalling him until HiSoft releases their BASIC on the Amiga.

December 1, 1988

MichTron gets a letter from GFA telling them that effective Jan 1, 1989 they are no longer licensed to sell or service any GFA programs.

Editor Note:

As with all controversial issues there are TWO sides to every story, now, after having read and heard all the hype from Comdex 'till reading the above, it is easy to see why Michtron did what they did. This is a situation where Michtron, who has faithfully served the ST community from day one, has been dealt from the bottom of the deck and deserves a better shake than what we see has happened. Some folks would call it "business" and rightfully so. It would appear that Michtron made every attempt to maintain a professional posture, especially in wanting to wait for a firm version of 3.0 for the Amiga. As a result of what we have seen, we support Michtron in it's decision as far as GFA is concerned.

We say it is time for the US companies to mature and realize that the methods of doing business employed "on the other side" are different than in the States. Anyway, the negotiations between GFA and Michtron obviously could have been done behind the scenes without emotions clouding the picture and could possibly have been resolved.

As usual, in situations like this, the user, the little guy who forked over his hard earned dollars is left on the short end of the stick. Ok, the newer users got version 2.0 as a "freebie" or, at least, almost. What about all the thousands who payed full boat for the same program, does this mean that if one were to wait long enough any program today will become a dirt cheap commodity later on? Better yet, what guarantee do the users have the same series of unhappy events will not occur with version 3.0? Thanks, but no thanks.

Hisoft.....here I come.

ST REPORT CONFIDENTIALâ €
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Sacramento, CA

Sierra has increased it's customer service hours to 13 hours per day. 209-683-6858 This line will handle hints and technical problems. Customer support is becoming a priority and justly so.

NYC, NY -----	Paragon Software, formally allied with Electronic Arts, has joined forces with Micropose in the Medalist Software Group. Soon they will be working on a series not unlike the S.A.G.A. series we have seen on the ST. Paragon signed a deal with Marvel Comics. Spidy and Cap't. America are back!
Tokyo, Japan -----	SSI and Pony Canyon Inc. of Japan have signed a distribution agreement for SSI products to be sold in SE Asia. Most of SSI's goodies will be ported to the NEC 9801.
Miami, Fla -----	Baudville announces new goodies for the Amiga. Video Gammon, Dream Zone and Award Maker Plus round out the line up of new goodies for the Amiga.
Chicago, IL -----	Vega Technologies has announced a new Videotape (VHS) which is 40 minutes of intense instruction on how to use the Amiga CLI. They also offer a high class "leather" mouse pad in 3 degrees of surface friction, precise, general or fast. only \$15.95
Denver, CO -----	Once again we find the local dealer doing a dance on the hot plate of adversity, it seems the Federated Store near him has certain Atari Products he has NO access to at this time. Sam, is somebody is still dropping the ball? Or, is Federated being used for test marketing new products?
NYC, NY -----	PC Pursuit, is going to shock all of it's users with it's 'NEW' rate structure, "it wasn't too bad trying forever to reach a certain city for 25.00 mo. but at the new rates....FORGET IT!" Also, it appears they feel they have 2400 bd available at all their nodes. They should ask their PAYING customers if this is true.

ST's MIDI POWER
=====

About a new book by R.A. Penfold

The Atari ST is the proven leader in the music - computer field, with it's unrivaled and rapidly expanding range of available software and add-ons. It's built in MIDI ports, large memory, high processing power, good graphics, and moderate cost have made it the computer of choice for demanding musical applications such as MIDI sequencing.

This book is aimed at musicians who want to exploit the full potential of the Atari ST in music applications. a fundamental knowledge of how to use the ST and run programs on it, (basically, a solid grasp of the information provided in the user's manual), is necessary. For computer enthusiasts, some simple hardware projects are presented, along with information on how to program the ST's sound chip and MIDI programming, including some very useful MIDI processing routines.

Most of the material is easy for non-technical types to understand. Topics include applications programs such as sequencing and score writing; and simple but useful add-on projects. MIDI is covered in depth, with particular emphasis on how it applies to Atari STs. Full details of MIDI messages and coding are provided.

"MUSICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE ATARI STs"

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THIS WEEK'S QUOTABLE QUOTE
=====

The Mirror on the Wall Sez:

THERE IS NOTHING AS DEAD...AS THE ECHO OF YESTERDAY'S APPLAUSE!

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